

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISTANB 03495 191148Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6614

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS ISTANBUL 3495

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, TU

SUBJ: C.M. CASSETT FASHION SHOW

REF: A. ISTANBUL 3027; B. ANKARA 4699; C. BEIRUT 8346

1. GALA OPENING IN ISTANBUL OF CASSETT FASHION SHOW WAS HELD AT HILTON HOTEL ON OCTOBER 16 AT DINNER SPONSORED BY TURKISH RED CRESENT SOCIETY WHICH HAD BEEN PROMISED NET PROCEEDS FROM TICKET SALES FOR LICE EARTHQUAKE VICTIMS. APPROXIMATELY 100 FASHIONS WERE SHOWN TO AUDIENCE OF ABOUT 200 PERSONS, INCLUDING AMBASSADOR AND MRS MACOMBER AND GOVERNOR OF ISTANBUL AND HIS WIFE.

2. SHOW WAS BRISK AND BUSINESSLIKE PRESENTATION OF GOWNS OF LEADING US DESIGNERS, BUT IT DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE GENERATED HOPED FOR SALES OF 50 GOWNS (PARA 2 OF BEIRUT 8346). REASONS FOR THIS WE BELIEVE ARE DUE TO COMBINATION OF FOLLOWING FACTORS:

A. FAILURE IN CONCEPTION. TURKISH IMPORT REGULATIONS DO NOT PERMIT IMPORTATION OF ARTICLES OF CLOTHING FOR COMMERCIAL SALE.

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PAGE 02 ISTANB 03495 191148Z

CASSETT WAS ADVISED OF THIS BY LETTER ON JUNE 3 AN THIS WAS RE

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EMPHASIZED WHEN HE CAME TO ISTANBUL IN SEPTEMBER TO EXPLORE
ARRANGEMENTS FOR FASHION SHOW.

B. WEAKNESS IN ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION. ARRANGEMENTS WERE
MADE ON EXTREMELY SHORT NOTICE. ALTHOUGH CASSETT WROTE TO US IN
LATE MAY CONCERNING HIS PROPOSAL, HIS FIRST APPEARANCE IN ISTANBUL
TO MAKE PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS DID NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL MID-
SEPTEMBER. MOREOVER, SUBSEQUENT TO SEPTEMBER VISIT DATE FOR GALA
WAS CHANGED AND THIS CREATED CERTAIN AMOUNT OF CONFUSION. PERHAPS
MORE IMPORTANT FOR OVERALL ATTENDANCE, TICKET SALES COMMENCED
ONLY TWO WEEKS BEFORE EVENT AND THERE SEEMED TO BE LITTLE EFFEC-
TIVE PROMOTION ACTIVITY IN SUPPORT OF SALES.

C. HIGH PRICES. TICKETS COSTING \$50 PER PERSON WERE PROHIBI-
TIVELY HIGH FOR ISTANBUL AUDIENCE, EVEN FOR A CHARITY EVENT. MORE
IMPORTANTLY, HOWEVER, GOWNS WERE DRAMATICALLY OVERPRICED (RANGING
FROM \$400 TO \$4000) FOR THIS MARKET. ISTANBULLUS WHO CAN AFFORD
SUCH PRICES (AND THEY ARE SMALL IN NUMBER) TRAVEL FREQUENTLY
IN EUROPE AND THUS CAN PURCHASE FASHIONS OF THEIR CHOICE WITHOUT
DIFFICULTY.

MACE

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